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MISSIONS AND DOCTRINE

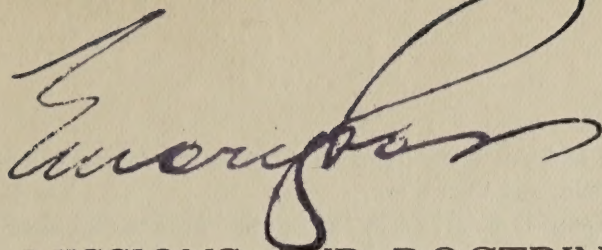
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MISSIONS AND DOCTRINE

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The word "mission" means a sending, and a missionary is one sent. Our Lord spoke of himself as one sent of God, and said to his disciples, "I came forth and am come from God; for neither have I come of myself, but he sent me"¹; "This is eternal life, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, *even* Jesus Christ"²; "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you."³ There are two words in the New Testament that are translated "doctrine." These are "didaskalia" and "didache." Both are from the same root. Didaskalia is found twenty-one times, and is translated "doctrine" fourteen times, "teaching" six times, and "learning" once. Didaskalia is never applied to the teaching of Jesus. We have it in the plural referring to the doctrines of men and the doctrines of demons; in the plural it never refers to the faith once for all delivered to the saints. Didache is found thirty times, and is translated "teaching" twenty-nine times and "doctrine" once.

Doctrine means teaching or instruction. In the Commission as recorded by Matthew, our Lord said to the twelve, "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you."⁴ In The Acts we read that those who gladly received the word and were baptized continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.⁵ In the Second Epistle to Timothy, Paul wrote, "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work."⁶

Sometimes the word doctrine is used with reference to what is called first principles, namely, faith, repentance, confession and baptism. It is never used in the New Testament in that limited

¹Jn. 8, 42. ²Jn. 17, 3. ³Jn. 20, 21. ⁴Mt. 28, 19-20. ⁵Ac. 2, 42. ⁶2 Ti. 3, 16-17.

sense. It includes these items as a matter of course, but it includes much more than these.

My purpose is to set forth the relation between missions and doctrine. I ask you to consider :

1. What missions have done to give us a more accurate knowledge of the word of God ; to discover and to emphasize passages that have been overlooked and neglected. Henry Clay Trumbull said that foreign missionaries have done more to enable Americans and Europeans generally to understand the Bible than have all other classes of scholars in all the centuries combined. He pointed out the fact that the Bible needed to be translated, but also that the land and the people contained in it must be understood and translated in order to make some of its most important messages not only forceful, but intelligible. Without this, much of the figurative language and teaching of this Oriental book would not be clear to us. It is just here, Trumbull says, that modern foreign missions have done so much good to American and European stay-at-homes.

The land of Palestine has been called the Fifth Gospel. Robinson in his "Biblical Researches," Thomson in "The Land and the Book," and Barclay in "The City of the Great King," have thrown a flood of light on that land. Others have followed in their steps and have added something, but the missionaries were the pioneers, and in many respects their works have never been excelled.

Missions are teaching us that the Bible is a missionary book. The Gospels contain phrases like these: All flesh, all nations, the whole world, all the world, the whole creation, the uttermost part of the earth. These phrases have no meaning if Christ's program is not a missionary program. Though his own ministry was confined to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, he said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd."¹ His last words to his disciples were these, "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."² The word "witness" is found in some form one hundred and seventy-five times in the New Testament. The word "messenger" is found four hundred times in the Old Testament and the New.

¹Jn. 10, 16, ²Ac. 1, 8.

Cut missions out of the Bible, it has been said, and it would bleed to death.

In his New Commentary on The Acts, President McGarvey referred to the Commission as given by Luke, and added, "We shall find that this commission is the key to the narrative before us; that the acts of the apostles here recorded are the counterpart of its terms, and the best exposition of its meaning." There are many things in The Acts, but the missionary idea is the chief thing, and no one can read the book and understand it who does not keep this thought in mind. The author traces the spread of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome, and closes his account with a description of the great apostle preaching in his own hired dwelling the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus with all boldness. The Epistles are missionary documents. The names they bear indicate this: Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Thessalonians. The Pastoral Epistles were written to guide two men who were instructing and setting in order the things that were wanting in several of the churches of that time. The General Epistles, with possibly one or two exceptions, were designed to establish the believers in the faith of Christ. The Revelation of John gives us a glimpse of the time when the kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.

As we have engaged in missions we have come to see what a large place missions have in the word of God. Years ago one of our strong men had a sermon on the Commission as given by Matthew. He preached it many times and thought so highly of it that he printed it. He had a chart on which he had placed the different thoughts in this great passage. The first word on the chart was the word "teach." He was asked why he did not place the word "go" on the chart. He hesitated and stammered and made the lame reply that there was no room on the canvas for it. The thought of going was not in his mind, and that was the true reason it did not find a place on the chart. Our Lord said, "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore."¹ Going is essential if all nations are to be disciplined. Hinduism seeks to remain within the borders of India. No orthodox Hindu is expected to go beyond those borders. If one should go to Europe or to America, he must be purified on

¹Mt. 28, 18-19.

his return by submitting to most repulsive rites before he can take his place again in Hindu society. But the command of the Living Lord is, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation."¹

There are other things that have been called to our attention by the missionary enterprise. One of these is the teaching of the Scriptures on stewardship. We are not our own; we have been bought with a price. "According as each one hath received a gift, so minister it among yourselves as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."² "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thy hand to do it."³ "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine,"⁴ saith the Lord. Another item of Biblical teaching is that of giving. "Give and it shall be given unto you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom."⁵ "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'. "⁶ "As ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all earnestness, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also."⁷ "Let each man do according as he hath purposed in his heart; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."⁸

One other item is that of self-denial. Those who go to the field give themselves wholly to the work. They spend their lives among alien peoples, among peoples of strange languages, and strange complexions, and strange customs. They forego many of the prizes that men of this world covet most earnestly. They wear themselves out in the service of their kind. They endure hardness as good soldiers. Those who remain at home share with them in the sacrificial life. They live simply that they may have the more to give. They learn to do without many of the comforts and conveniences of life, that they may contribute more liberally to the advancement of the interests of the Kingdom. Their thought is far removed from that of the man who said in the day of unwonted prosperity, "Soul, take thine ease: eat, drink, and be merry: thou hast much goods laid up in store for many years."⁹ There is a daily denial of self, that the gospel may be carried to every kindred, and tongue, and tribe, and people.

¹Mk. 16, 15. ²1 Pet. 4, 10. ³Prov. 3, 27. ⁴Hag. 2, 8. ⁵Lk. 6, 38. ⁶Ac. 20, 35. ⁷2 Cor. 8, 7.

⁸2 Cor. 9, 7. ⁹Lk. 12, 19.

2. Missions have demonstrated the sufficiency of the gospel as the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believes. That statement has not been accepted always; it is not accepted by all now. An eminent missionary says that the questions put to him on returning from the field by professedly Christian people often shake his faith, not in missions, but in their own Christian profession. He asks what kind of grasp of the gospel men have who doubt whether it is to-day, under any sky, the power of God unto salvation.

A century ago it was said that God would convert the nations when it pleased him, and it was not for his people to anticipate the appointed hour or begin so vast a work in the dark. In his earlier years Alexander Campbell held that nothing would be accomplished by preaching the gospel to a non-Christian people, because the age of miracles was past. He held that the apostles worked miracles, and because they did they were able to win multitudes to the faith of Christ. The Church has no such power to-day, and therefore missions are unauthorized and useless. That view is not held now by any considerable number, and it was not held by him in his mature years. It is not held now that God will convert the nations when it suits his purpose. It is not held that miracles are essential to the conversion of the world. The word of the Cross is the power of God to all who believe. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. President Hovey has said that theology is a debtor to missions for a transfer of emphasis from the omnipotence of God to his holy love.

On no field has the gospel been preached in vain. From the very first it showed itself to be a victorious faith. On Pentecost those that gladly received the word were baptized, and that day there were added to the original group three thousand souls. The record says that the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved. A little later the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly, and a great company of the priests became obedient to the faith. In Corinth many hearing believed, and were baptized. The same is true in our day. The gospel is still God's power to save every believer. It has shown itself to be that among the Caucasians, the Chinese, the Japanese, the Africans, the Polynesians, and among all races and all nations. It is all-sufficient and alone-sufficient for the redemption of fallen humanity.

3. Missions are teaching the Church her mission in the world. The words of the prophet are applicable to the Church. "It is too light a thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth."¹ The one duty that the risen Lord assigned the Church was that of carrying the gospel into all parts of the habitable world. The Reformers of the sixteenth century did not understand this. Luther said that in a hundred years all would be over. It was too late to attempt anything in the regions beyond.

A moment ago I referred to the views of Alexander Campbell in his youth. In his mature years he maintained that the Church was a missionary institution. He said that the Church of Christ is essentially and necessarily a missionary society, and until the whole human family has heard the gospel, missions will be in order, and will be the Church's paramount and transcendent work, duty, privilege, and honor. More and more this view is being held by the whole body of believers. The Churches are coming to understand that their glory is not in having the costliest building and the grandest organ, but consists in what they are doing to give the gospel to those who have never heard the name of the Son of God. Paul's ambition was so to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, that he might not build upon another man's foundation.² More and more that ambition will become the ambition of the Church until the last man for whom Christ died shall hear the word of truth, the gospel of salvation.

4. We are learning anew from missions the value of prayer. Dean Bosworth says this, "The most frequent and perhaps the most vital inquiry regarding prayer is expressed in the question: Can prayer accomplish anything apart from the man who prays? Does prayer consist in anything more than a devout soliloquy? Is it anything more than a spiritual exercise, healthful for the one who practices it, but without direct effect upon any other person, God or man?" There are many Christians who believe the effect of prayer is purely subjective. They hold that we are living in a world of law, and that prayer cannot change or accomplish anything aside from its effect upon the one who prays.

Missionaries are doing much to make the words of our Lord

¹Is. 49, 6. ²Ro. 15, 20.

credible: "Ask, and it shall be given you"¹; "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything which they shall ask, it shall be done unto them by my Father who is in heaven."² In hours of extremity the missionaries are thrown back on God, and they know that they receive what they ask. Dr. Shelton of Tibet has performed major operations with almost no equipment. According to all the teachings of medical science the patients could not have recovered; but they did, and he attributes their recovery to the prayers offered by himself and his associates and the friends far away. Mary Slessor of Calabar has borne this testimony: "My life is one long, daily, hourly record of answered prayer. For physical health, for mental overstrain, for guidance given miraculously, for errors and dangers averted, for enmity to the gospel subdued, for food provided at the exact hour needed, for everything that goes to make up my life and my service, I can testify with a free and often wonder-stricken awe that I believe that God answers prayer. I know that God answers prayer. I have proved during long decades while alone, as far as man's help and presence are concerned, that God answers prayer. Cavilings, logical or physical, are of no avail to me. It is the very atmosphere in which I live and breathe and have my being, and it makes life glad and free and a million times worth living. I can give no other testimony. I am sitting alone here on a log among a company of natives. My children, whose very lives are a testimony that God answers prayer, are working around me. Natives are crowding past on the bush road to attend palavers, and I am at perfect peace, far from my own countrymen and conditions, because I know that God answers prayer. Food is scarce just now. We live from hand to mouth. We have no more than will be our breakfast to-day, but I know we shall be fed, for God answers prayer."

Paul asked the believers of his day to help him with their supplication, to continue steadfast in prayer, that God would open a door for the word; he asked them to pray for him that utterance might be given to him that he might make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel. He urged them to pray that the word of the Lord might have free course and be glorified, and that he and his associates might be delivered from unreasonable and evil men. And every missionary since that time has sent similar requests to those who are at home.

¹Mt. 7, 7. ²Mt. 18, 19.

Hudson Taylor asked for one hundred men within a year, and a hundred and one men were given. He asked for fifty thousand dollars to defray their expenses to China; he asked that the money might come in a few large gifts, as the bookkeeper was sick and away from the mission rooms—and the money came in eleven gifts. The simple faith of the missionaries is making it possible for the Churches to believe that prayer is something more than a devout soliloquy, that prayer accomplishes what would not be accomplished if prayer were not offered.

5. Missions strengthen faith. The clearest and most convincing proofs of God's presence and activity in the world come from the mission fields. Dr. Gibson of South China says, "The mission field has its great rewards, and perhaps the chief of them is the strong confirmation of faith which its scenes afford." He adds that when you see truth and purity, love and honor, generosity and tenderness, self-denial and unworldly faith, springing to blossom and setting to fruit in a moral soil like that of China, with the heavens overhead as brass and the earth as iron beneath, while the very atmosphere seems heavy and foul with heathenism all around,—when you see these things, you must say, "The finger of God is here." "We recognize the unmistakable husbandry of God, and one feels that it is worth while to be a missionary, were it only to see for one's self, at first hand, the authentic working of His spirit." Heredity, custom, education, social influence, public opinion, and popular ideals are solid against the entrance of the gospel; it does its redeeming work nevertheless. Dr. Gibson refers to the lotus which roots itself in rotten mud, thrusts up its leaves and blossoms through the foul and stagnant water, lifts its spotless petals over all, holding them up pure, stainless, and fragrant, in the face of a burning and pitiless sun, and says, "So it is with the Christian life in China. Its continuance there is a miracle of life, of life more abundant." The mighty changes effected in the lives of the converts are a demonstration of God's presence and power. In the apostolic age it was said of some that in time past they had been thieves, they had been extortioners, they lived unclean lives; but they had been washed; they had been sanctified and justified by the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

The effect of the service upon the missionaries shows the same thing. In the book entitled, "The Little Green God," it is said that some of the best people in the prosperous church in which

the missionary spoke, said to the minister that he made it easier to believe. There was something about the man and about his address that made them think of God and of God's grace and power. The history of the Moravians and the lives of Carey and Judson and Morrison and Moffat and Livingstone and Garst and Wharton and Loftis and Eldred and Butchart and Meigs create faith and confirm faith.

6. Missions corroborate the teaching of the Scriptures as to the unity of the race. Mankind is represented as springing from a single pair. It is said that God has made of one all the nations that dwell on all the face of the earth. All have the same characteristics; all have sinned and have come short of the glory of God; all are weak and need help. Books have been written to prove that some people have no souls, that they are brute beasts and must perish as brute beasts. They are classed with baboons and with dogs. Men have spoken of the folly of trying to clothe asses with immortality. Darwin saw some people who were so low in the scale that he did not believe that all the missionaries in the world could do them any good. Later in his life he confessed that he was mistaken, and expressed his joy in what had been done by the missionaries to elevate and to ennoble those very people. Most ethnologists and anthropologists hold that all men sprang from one pair, and that the different conditions under which they have lived are sufficient to account for the existing differences in language, in custom, and in complexion. The most competent judges hold with the Bible that all are children of one Great Father, "in whatever clime his providence has cast the seeds of life, all tongues, all colors."

We are tempted to think that the English-speaking peoples of the white race are superior to all others, and to speak with contempt of the other races of the world. We would do well to bear in mind the great men these other races have produced. From the Slavs have come Copernicus, who lived and wrought before Newton; Comenius, who anticipated Pestalozzi, Froebel, Horace Mann, and Mark Hopkins; John Huss, who lived a century before Luther; Sobieski, who crushed the Turkish army before Vienna; Kosciusko and Pulaski, who were friends and assistants of Washington. From the Italians, of whom we speak as Dagoes, have come Dante, Columbus, Raphael, Michael Angelo, Del Sarto, Angelico, Galileo, Mazzini, Garibaldi, Galvani, Volta, and Marconi. We speak of the Jews with contempt, and lose

sight of the fact that from the Jews came Abraham, the friend of God; Israel, a prince who had favor with God and men; Moses, the noblest character of antiquity; Samuel, Elijah, David, Isaiah, John the Baptist, Matthew, Mark, John, Paul, and Christ according to the flesh. Jews have been soldiers, statesmen, musicians, merchants, philanthropists. We speak of the Chinese and call them Chinks; but John R. Mott says that in his travels among more than thirty nations the race that has impressed itself most upon him is the Chinese, "not so much because of its strategic location, its vast extent, its immense natural resources, as the characteristics of the race itself." Rev. F. L. Anderson says, "When I was a professor at the University of Chicago we had a Chinese as a student. He was the most accomplished gentleman I ever knew. His faultless grace of manner always made me feel awkward in his presence. My father said he was the aptest student in metaphysics he ever saw."

A speaker at Northfield spoke of the Chinese as follows: "Has it occurred to you that when our Irish ancestors were clad in skins and eating raw flesh, the Chinese were dressed in silks, and merchant princes were sending caravans straight across Asia to trade with ancient Rome? While our Scotch ancestors, moreover, were dwelling in caves, each man with his own woman, gnawing the bones of animals slain with clubs, the Chinese dwelt in walled cities, centers of administration, linked up with great trunk roads, like the Roman roads. Has it occurred to you that, while our English ancestors were in the Druidic forests, sacrificing human victims to their cruel gods, the Chinese emperor was uttering prayers of remarkable purity to one God? Let us never forget that fact. The difference between these races is that they did not 'evolve' a true religion, but they continued to 'devolve' to where they are. And I want you to keep in mind that when our Norse ancestors, who conceived of heaven, Valhalla, as a slaughter-house, were breaking open the heads of their enemies, our ancestors, and drinking the blood hot, then the Chinese emperor was having an encyclopedia compiled for use in hundreds of homes. We think of our democracy beginning with the town-meeting; but long before that the Chinese had their own village democracy with elders and chosen men of ability who naturally came to the front to rule over them. When our German ancestors were clad in skins of wild animals, and sliding on their shields down the Alps into Italy, ravaging and destroying every-

thing of art and culture which Italy had gathered at Rome—at a time like that, the Chinese were filling government positions by means of civil service examinations, and long before the time of Abraham they were writing essays of flawless diction in civil service competition.”

Dr. Gracey says: “When Moses led the Israelites through the wilderness, Chinese laws and literature and Chinese religious knowledge excelled that of Egypt. A hundred years before the north wind rippled over the harp of David, Wung Wang, an emperor of China, composed classics which are committed to memory at this day by every advanced scholar of the empire. While Homer was composing and singing the Iliad, China’s blind minstrels were celebrating her ancient heroes, whose tombs had already been with them through nearly thirteen centuries. Her literature was fully developed before England was invaded by the Norman conquerors. The Chinese invented firearms as early as the reign of England’s first Edward, and the art of printing five hundred years before Caxton was born. They made paper A. D. 150, and gunpowder about the commencement of the Christian era. A thousand years ago the forefathers of the present Chinese sold silks to the Romans, and dressed in these fabrics when the inhabitants of the British Isles wore coats of blue paint and fished in willow canoes. Her great wall was built two hundred and twenty years before Christ was born at Bethlehem, and contains material enough to build a wall five or six feet high around the globe.”

Professor Ross says that among a score of farmers in a little congregation, gathered to dedicate a country chapel in Fokien, he noticed four fine faces, and one peasant who might have sat to Leonardo da Vinci for his St. John. Professor Ross says that there is nothing more creditable to the domestic organization of the Chinese than the attractive old people it produces. “I have never seen old faces more dignified, serene, and benevolent than I have met with among elderly Chinese farmers.” Professor Ross saw a stripling in West China who might have posed for Michael Angelo’s David. “Often the eye lights on an oval face, with arched, penciled eyebrows, delicate temples, straight nose, high-cut nostrils, and fine eyes, beautiful as Antinous. The world has been slow to realize that nowhere is there a more high-bred countenance than can be found in China.”

Professor Ross asked forty-three men, who as educators, mis-

sionaries, and diplomats, had good opportunity to know the fact, "Do you find the intellectual capacity of the yellow race equal to that of the white race?" All but five answered, yes. One Sinologue of varied experience as missionary, university president, and legation adviser left him gasping with the statement, "Most of us who have spent twenty-five years or more out here have come to feel that the yellow race is the normal human type, while the white race is a 'sport'."

We are apt to think no good can come of the Negro race. Booker Washington was a negro, and spoke at one of our conventions some twenty years ago. Among the million people that constitute our fellowship, it was said that there was not one who was his equal as a speaker.

7. Missions are teaching the need of union and cooperation. It is not long since good men contended that divisions are of God, and that Churches are doing more in competition than they could do in cooperation. I remember when a minister in my own city was tried for heresy because he contended in a sermon that division was a sin. What was heresy then is a first and fundamental truth now. The leading men in many communions are advocating union and setting forth the good effects that would follow. A great literature on union has been created in the past two or three decades. At the Edinburg Conference it was stated that if all the forces in the field could be united it would be equivalent to doubling the staff, and that without spending another dollar or employing another man. It goes with the saying that the strongest pressure in the direction of union comes from the fields. The missionaries see, as others do not, the evil of division. They have been told to agree among themselves before undertaking to teach others. The king of Uganda said, "Every white man has a religion of his own; how am I to know who is right and who is wrong?" The missionaries recognize the force of the words of the Indian chief, "All your strength is in your union, all your danger is in discord; therefore be in peace together, and as brothers live." Long ago Alexander Campbell said that the only thing necessary to the conversion of the world is the union and cooperation of all believers. One result of the missionary enterprise is this,—the abundant teaching of the Scriptures on this subject is receiving new emphasis. "Give diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."¹ "Now I beseech you,

¹Eph. 4, 3.

brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment."¹

8. Missions are giving us a fuller knowledge of Christ. We are told that in Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. We read of His unsearchable riches. We read again that in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Paul prayed for the Ephesians that they might be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that passeth knowledge.² It was only as they were able to apprehend this with all the saints that they would be able to apprehend it fully, for Christ is larger and richer than anything that any one has been able to understand concerning him. Bishop Gore has said that no Church and no race has attained to the full apprehension of all that the Lord Jesus truly is. He said also that as in the past the various races have in their own way added something to the revelation of the unsearchable riches of Christ, so in the future every race will by its thought and life apprehend and reveal riches in Christ which the Western races need also to apprehend. "Each race has its own special aptitudes, its glory and honor, and as the glory and honor of each nation has been brought within the light of the Holy City, the versatility and intellect of the Greeks, the majestic discipline of the Romans, and the strong individuality of the Teutons, each in turn has been able to find its true ideal in Jesus of Nazareth." "Only together, all ages, all races, both sexes, can we grow into one body, into the perfect man. Only a really catholic society can be the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. Thus we cannot doubt that, when the day comes that shall see the existence of really national Churches in India, and Japan, and China, the tranquillity and inwardness of the Hindu, the pertinacity and patience of the Chinaman, the lightness and amiability of the Japanese, will each in turn receive its best consecration in Christ, and bring out new and unsuspected aspects of the Christian life, finding fresh resources in Him in whom is neither Jew nor Greek, neither male nor female, barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, but Christ is all and in all."

Bishop Westcott has the same thought. He says, "Vast peoples, richly endowed with manifold gifts, still remain outside the

¹ 1 Cor. 1, 10. ² Eph. 3, 18-19.

pale of the faith. These may even now be being disciplined for some future work. The races of the Far East, we can hardly doubt, will in their season lay open fresh depths of the gospel which we are unfitted to discover. Already there are symptoms of such a consummation: and when once we trust the simple gospel message, we shall be allowed to learn as we have never yet done how it can take up and transfigure the most different forms of conduct and thought, and become more glorious as it does so." Dr. Arthur Judson Brown has spoken to the same effect, "I doubt if we shall ever know all that is in Christ until we can blend the interpretation of Europeans and Americans with that of the self-forgetting loyalty of the Japanese, the practical sense of the Chinese, the profound mysticism of the East Indian, the childlike emotionalism of the African, and the swift intuition of the Korean. The Asiatic, when once regenerated and guided by the Spirit of God, may be more likely to interpret the real meaning of the Bible and of Christ than we who belong to a different race, for he brings an Oriental mind and point of view to the interpretation of an Oriental Book. The missionaries who are winning these nations to Christ are hastening the coming of the time when the Church will be able to comprehend what now she is able only to apprehend."

9. Missions are calling us back to the simplicity of the early ages of the Church. The missionary thinks little of philosophy and ritual and dogma, and much of the faith once for all delivered to the saints. The people among whom he lives and works have no interest in the creeds of Christendom; without a knowledge of the history of the Church such as they do not possess, these creeds have no meaning for them. Dr. Behrends, himself a mighty preacher in his day, said, "Foreign missions act as a flail upon the threshing floor of ancient scholasticism and modern criticism. I have noted a habit of condescension where foreign missionaries are the theme of conversation. We are told that abler men, and more of them, must be sent out. As if every man in orders at home was a Gabriel! Pardon me, but what little I have seen of foreign missionaries has created in me the conviction that they constitute the most cosmopolitan class in the ministry. The East and the West have mingled their streams in their life. They have thought their way through to a simpler theology than have we. They have ceased to tithe mint, anise, and cummin. They have learned that Japan and China will never

repeat the shibboleths of our schools. They have concentrated upon fundamentals. They listen in silence, with wondering eyes and burdened hearts, to many of our disputations. They know what kind of gospel the great world needs; and I have sometimes thought it might be well if they should draw up a creed that would be binding on us who stay at home. At all events, the simplicity which experience has forced upon them must master us. Nor is it difficult to state what that ultimate simplicity of doctrinal conviction must be. It must be the primitive simplicity. There can be no other. We must come back to the New Testament. Our religion must centralize in personal devotion to the personal Christ. He is our Master; He alone. We must stop deifying dogma. We must stop deifying ritual."

It is said of John Coleridge Patteson that he had no time or inclination to think about anything except the gospel which had cast out the devil from the Melanesians, and led them in quietness and humility to sit at the feet of Jesus. He felt the immense relief of being at such a distance from the sphere of contention and theological difference. He wrote home, "My dear father writes in great anxiety about the Denison case. Oh, dear! What a cause for thankfulness it is to be out of the din of controversy, and to find hundreds of thousands longing for crumbs which are shaken about so roughly in these angry disputes! It isn't High nor Low nor Broad Church, or any other special name, but the longing to forget all distinctions, and to return to the simpler state of things, that seems to result naturally from the very sight of heathen people. Who thinks of anything but this: They have never heard the name of the Saviour who died for them, when he is standing with crowds of naked fellows around him."

10. Missions are giving the Church a worthier conception of its founder as the Saviour of the world. There is salvation in him, and there is salvation in none other, for there is no other name given under heaven and among men whereby we must be saved. Bishop Greer has stated that Foreign Missions exert a beneficial influence upon our life at home by putting into it a truer and worthier conception of Jesus Christ himself and of the religion of Jesus Christ. The distinctive feature of that religion is its universalism. Other religions are local, national, or ethnic, for particular races and peoples; but the religion of Jesus Christ is for all races and peoples. It is a religion of human life, and if we make it anything else or anything less than that we change

not only its compass and scope, but its character as well. Then it is not the religion of Jesus Christ; it has a provincial narrowness in and a provincial accent on it. Jesus Christ himself is not Jesus Christ. He is made to appear provincial; and it is not to a provincial Christ or to a provincial-appearing Christ that people will respond, in mission fields or in other fields. "I, if I be lifted up," he says, "will draw all men unto me."¹ Yes, so he will, and so he does.

When, therefore, we hear it said, as we sometimes do, that there are heathen at home, and that our Christian efforts should be confined to them, my answer is, Yes, so there are; and there are heathen notions at home unless we are also trying to reach the heathen away from home. We cannot get the full force of the gospel of Jesus Christ into the cities and towns and villages of America, except as we try to get it to them by going around the globe.

The main objective of missions is the evangelization of all nations. The command is, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation."² "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."³ But the calling of souls out of darkness into light, and from the power of Satan unto God, is not the sole result of the missionary propaganda. As the Church engages in the prosecution of her task she obtains a more accurate knowledge of the word of God; she is assured of the sufficiency of the gospel for the purpose for which it was given; she comes to know beyond any peradventure what her own mission is; she sees a demonstration of the value of prayer; her faith in God is confirmed; she comes to realize that the human race is a unit; she is made to realize her need of union and cooperation; she comes to a fuller knowledge of the unsearchable riches of Christ; she is called back to the simplicity of the early ages of the faith; she has a worthier conception of the Founder of our holy religion. These are by-products, to be sure, but very precious by-products. The better understanding of the teaching of the Scriptures on the topics named and on other topics constitutes an added reason for doing as much as in us lies to preach the gospel in all creation under heaven unto the obedience of faith.

¹Jn. 12, 32. ²Mk. 16, 15. ³Ac. 1, 8.

